



U.S. COAST GUARD



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COAST GUARD TOBACCO CESSATION

On March 21, 2005, the Coast Guard's Health and Safety Directorate will launch a new tobacco cessation service for all active duty members, their families, reservists and civilian employees. This free telephone based counseling service will be provided by Mayo Clinic Tobacco Quitline.

Every year 440,000 Americans die from tobacco-related illness and 38,000 more die from diseases caused by exposure to second-hand smoke. Although only 25% of American adults currently use tobacco products, one study has shown that Coast Guard members have a tobacco use prevalence rate as high as 32% including smokeless products.

Giving up tobacco is not just a matter of willpower. People often require assistance to kick-the-habit. According to the American Cancer Society, tobacco users are twice as likely to beat their nicotine addiction when they enroll in a tobacco cessation program like Mayo Clinic Tobacco Quitline.

To enroll in Mayo Clinic Tobacco Quitline, eligible members within the United States can call the toll-free telephone number (1-888-642-5566) from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday EST. Members stationed overseas can obtain an appropriate access number and instructions on how to access the quitline at <http://www.business.att.com/bt/tollfree.jsp>. Once connected, a counselor will complete a thorough assessment of the member's history of tobacco use and stage of readiness to quit. The counselor will then design an individual treatment plan that is tailored to unique circumstances and triggers for tobacco use. Once enrolled, the member and the counselor will arrange convenient times for follow-up calls (up to four) scheduled just before and after the quit date. So, the counselor can answer questions and provide the support and encouragement needed for members to quit successfully.

While only about 5% of tobacco users are able to quit on their own, Mayo Clinic Tobacco Quitline has success rates between 30% and 40%. This type of phone based counseling truly works! I strongly encourage you to promote this resource to all eligible Coast Guard employees. The collaboration between the Coast Guard and Mayo Clinic Tobacco Quitline is another step towards reducing tobacco use in the Coast Guard, resulting in a more healthy and mission ready workforce.

Regards,

RADM Kenneth T. Venuto
Ken Venuto

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